



# Social Communication Team (SCT)

## Newsletter, Autumn 2024

Welcome to our Seasonal Newsletter, for children known to the Social Communication Team (SCT)

### Seasonal Changes

There are lots of changes as we move from Summer to Autumn. For children who prefer predictability and sameness, any changes to the environment and their routine can be highly distressing. Your child may be starting a new nursery or school or settling back to nursery/ school after a long break. Setting up a new routine can be difficult but there are things you can do to help your child understand and prepare for these changes.



### Waiting for your child's assessment?

We understand how frustrating it is to wait. However, there are many strategies which can help all children, whether or not they have received a diagnosis.

**Using strategies early will not impact the outcome of your child's assessment.**



### Seasonal wardrobe changes

As the weather gets cooler, we may change the clothes we wear. We may add layers or switch to warmer fabrics to keep warm. Some children may love wearing their summer clothes and find any changes or adjustments to new fabrics very disruptive. If your child is starting school, they may have a new uniform to get used to.

- Offering your child choices between clothes to wear can give them a sense of control and help you understand their preferences. Do they like tighter or looser clothing? What type of fabrics?,
- Is there anything you can adjust to make your child more comfortable like cutting out labels?
- Give your child time to get used to any new clothes.



If your child is experiencing sensory needs and difficulty wearing clothes, visit our [sensory needs page](#) and/ or speak to our team at the [SCT Therapy and Play](#) (see details on page 4). You can also speak to your school SENCO if your child is having difficulty wearing a new uniform.





## Helping your child for their return to nursery/school

The Summer break will soon come to an end and the return to school is approaching. Here are a few tips for helping your child with their transition to the start of term:

Use a calendar and cross off the days leading to the first day of school.



Show your child a photo of the school building and let them know soon they will join a new class and have a different teacher.



Allow plenty of time for getting ready in the morning and dressing in the new uniform. Cut off any labels that may be uncomfortable.

Show them their packed lunch box and what goes inside. Practice how to open and close it.



## Supporting routine

Building a new routine after the summer break can be challenging. Visual support can help your child know what to expect on their journey to a new school/ nursery.

Taking pictures of what you have planned is a great way to prepare your child.

Use your phone to show a photo of how you are travelling to school/nursery and the building or their new classroom:

**NOW**



**NEXT**



For

more information on this topic please visit our [Supporting Understanding page](#)

## Helping your child communicate what they want by offering choices

Choice making is something we do daily. Offering everyday choices gives your child a sense of control and opportunity to communicate. Choices are everywhere from what we wear, to what we eat and where we go! If your child is taking a packed lunch to school you can try offering a choice of food or snack to have:



Show and ask 'banana or apple?'

Pause and allow time for their response.

They might point, say the word or look to their choice.

If you go to the park after school, you can, offer a choice of activity. Point and ask 'Would you like to go on the climbing frame or swing?' Practise it every time!





## Advice and support for parents and carers

### SENDIAS



SENDIAS provide SEND advice for parents and carers. This can include help with applications and support during meetings.

SENDIAS also run **coffee mornings and themed workshops** for parents/ carers to connect and receive practical advice:

Click [here](#)

### ASC for Tea



Centre 404 run this group to support parents and carers of children who have received a diagnosis of autism, to connect and receive practical advice.



Click [here](#)

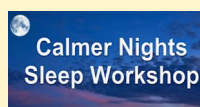
### Growing Together:



Growing together offer support around mental health and wellbeing for families with children aged 0-5years in Islington

Click [here](#)

Look out for free workshops which can be booked via



### Islington Family Information Service (FIS)



This service offers information and advice about free early learning and childcare, activities and support services for families with children 0-25.

Click [here](#)

### Bright Start family support



The service is for all parents-to-be and parents and carers of children under 5 years in Islington. They can support you with any question by providing advice and/or signposting to other services.

Click [here](#)

### Useful websites to learn about autism

[Ambitious about autism](#)

[National Autistic Society](#)



# Activities you can take your child to

## SCT Therapy and Play



The group offers an inclusive environment for children not yet in school (aged 0-5), who have been referred to the SCT or have a diagnosis of Autism. Sessions are delivered by Bright Start staff and supported by the SCT.

**You will be able to get advice from the SCT therapy assistant, Speech and language therapist or Occupational therapist.**

Drop in with your child term time 10:00-11:30am at the following locations:

- Tuesdays: Bemerton Children's Centre
- Thursdays: Hornsey Road Children's Centre



For further information, contact: [brightstart-south@islington.gov.uk](mailto:brightstart-south@islington.gov.uk) / 0207527 4089

## Relaxed performances

Many cinemas (e.g., Odeon and Vue) and theatres offer viewings which have been adapted to improve experiences for people with sensory and communication needs, or anyone who would benefit from a more relaxed environment. Adaptions may include changes to sound and lighting during shows.

Ask your cinema/ theatre if they offer "relaxed performances"



## Bright Start activities



Bright Start run various stay and play groups across Islington.

Look out for a group called '**Extra Boost**': a specialist group for under 5s with additional needs, who benefit from a quieter spaces

## Sensory drop in with free lending library

St Georges Church in Tufnell park run fortnightly sessions on Saturdays where you can explore sensory equipment for movement and regulation (such as therapy balls, mini trampolines, scooter boards



## Visit museums at quieter times

Some museums offer children with additional needs and their families opportunities to visit out of usual hours at quieter times such as [Dawnosaurs at the National History Museum](#).

## Newsletter feedback

If you have any feedback about this newsletter and/or suggestions, we would love to hear from you. Please click [here](#) or use the QR code





*Scan the QR code above to view this newsletter online and access the links*